United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1218
2 September 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General meets with world leaders on last day of his official visit to Indonesia; reviews regional and other issues at news conference.

+ Security Council holds consultations on humanitarian situation in Iraq and follow-up to London Conference on Former Yugoslavia.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson, to begin two-week trip on Wednesday, 9 September, to Somalia, Kenya, the Sudan, Djibouti and Zimbabwe to review humanitarian assistance programmes.

+ Today, flight number one thousand landed in Sarajevo carrying some 13 tons of relief supplies for some 450,000 residents in and around the city.

+ World Food Programme expands its relief aid to drought affected villagers in southern Madagascar.

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On the last day of his official visit to Indonesia, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today with a number of world leaders.

The Secretary-General informed the President of Namibia, Sam Nujoma, during their discussion of the situation in South Africa, of the intention of the United Nations to send observers there.

The Secretary-General thanked the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Hussain Nawas Sharif, for that country's contribution to the United Nations peace keeping operations, particularly in Somalia.

At a meeting with President Soeharto of Indonesia, the Secretary-General and the President agreed to hold continuous consultations in order to enhance the cooperation between the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement.

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For information media—not an official record

In his discussions with the President of Cyprus, George Vassiliou, Mr. Boutros-Ghali reaffirmed the importance he attaches to the meetings to be held at Headquarters on 26 October, when direct talks between the two leaders on Cyprus will resume. At a further meeting today with the Prime Minister of Morocco, Abdellatif Filali, the Secretary-General discussed recent developments concerning Western Sahara.

After his meetings today in Jakarta, he Secretary-General held a perss conference, and in reply to a question on the possibility of changing the composition of the Security Council, the Secretary-General said that such a change would need a revision of the United Nations Charcer and that would require the agreement of the Council's five Permanent Members.

Asked about East-Timor, the Secretary-General said he had discussed the question with President Suharto, and they had agreed that during the forthcoming General Assembly the Secretary-General would invite the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal to discuss the issue without preconditions.

On the peace process in Cambodia, the Secretary-General told correspondents that he had had a "positive and constructive talk" with Prince Norodom Sihanouk, and that there was political will among the different factions to reinforce the Paris Agreements and to cooperate with the United Nations.

Asked whether the United Nations could operate in Somalia, even though some of the parties had not agreed to United Nations presence in their territory, the Secretary-General replied that troops could be sent to other regions in Somalia where the parties had accepted the presence of the United Nations divisions, and that the United Nations would continue to hold negotiations with the other factions until an agreement was reached.

Concerning the ongoing Middle East peace talks, the Secretary-General said the United Nations was following them with great attention, and next week he would receive the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel to discuss with him the current negotiations.

Among the Secretary-General's other appointments today were meetings with the Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, Vladislav Jovanovic; the Foreign Minister of Algeria, Lakhdar Brahimi; the President of Iran, Ali-Akbar Rafsanjani; the President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi; and the Foreign Minister of Egypt, Amre Moussa.

The Secretary-General leaves Indonesia tomorrow for Moscow and will be back in New York on Monday, 7 September.

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The Security Council held consultations this afternoon concerning the humanitarian situation in Iraq and the follow-up to the London Conference on Former Yugoslavia.

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Speaking to correspondents before the Council began its deliberations, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, Sir David Hannay, said the President of the Council, Jose Ayala Lasso (Ecuador), would issue a Presidential statement concerning the situation in Iraq, supporting the efforts of the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson to maintain humanitarian activities throughout Iraq.

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A senior United Nations official is to visit five African countries to review humanitarian assistance programmes. During the two-week trip, which begins Wednesday, 9 September, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Eliasson will go to Somalia, Kenya, the Sudan, Djibouti and Zimbabwe.

In Somalia, where he will be joined by the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), James Grant, and accompanied by officials of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Food Programme (WFP), Mr Eliasson will examine arrangements for the coordination of United Nations humanitarian efforts in that country. He will also review rehabilitation and reconstruction needs, to the extent feasible.

In Kenya, he will meet with government officials and organizations and individuals involved in humanitarian and refugee operations. Mr Eliasson will then visit the Sudan to review with all concerned the United Nations programme of humanitarian assistance to that country, Operation Lifeline Sudan. His talks will deal, in particular, with questions related to access to people in need as well as with the problem of displaced persons. While in Khartoum he will meet with representatives of non-governmental organizations and donors, and arrangements are being made for him to meet with parties involved in conflict in that country.

In Zimbabwe, Mr Eliasson is to address a seminar on disaster management training which will be attended government and other officials, and United Nations relief workers. They will review the drought situation in southern Africa, and at a meeting with United Nations resident coordinators in the drought-affected countries Mr Eliasson will take stock of the appeal launched by the United Nations last June in cooperation with the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

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The one thousandth flight of relief supplies to the besieged city of Sarajevo was carried out today by a United States C-130 cargo aircraft. At least nineteen countries have participated directly in the United Nations humanitarian airlift which began early in July. Today's flight carried some 13 tons of supplies for the estimated 450,000 residents in and around the city.

The airlift has so far delivered more than 12,000 tons of desperately needed food, medicine and other relief supplies donated by the European Community, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health

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Organisation (WHO) and many other countries and private agencies.The effort is being co-ordinated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

There has been an average of 16 flights daily with a total of about 200 tons of supplies which, after unloading, are taken by UNHCR to five main warehouses in the city for distribution.

The High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata said the airlift was an example of the international community's determination to help the innocent victims of the war in ex-Yugoslavia. She paid tribute to those who have risked their lives in the relief efforts. Sarajevo remains under daily bombardment and sniping in the city's streets continues.

Despite the success of the airlift, UNHCR is concerned about the onset of winter in a few weeks' time when bad weather is likely to cause flight delays. UNHCR and its partners are stepping up the number of land convoys into Bosnia-Herzegovina. Already at least 5 trucks a day are bringing relief supplies to Sarajevo by road from the coastal city of Split.

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Particularly concerned about the alarming reports of malnutrition among young children in the areas affected by four years of consecutive drought in southern Madagascar, the World Food Programme (WFP) today announced an expansion of its emergency relief operations there.

The food aid is expected to cover the basic needs of 320,000 people for two months, in an area the Madagascar Government has declared a disaster zone. At least 830,000 people are affected by the drought, and the number is expected to swell to about 1 million before the end of the year. In June, medical surveys found that one in three children in southern Madagascar was severely malnourished.

Part of additional supplies of food aid will support two special feeding projects for 20,000 children in centres operated by the Medecins Sans Frontieres, Medecins du Monde, and Action Contre la Faim.

The WFP is expecting to receive donations from other international donors. To date, the European Community Germany, France, Italy and the World Bank have responded.

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